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SUBJECT: GUATEMALA ESTABLISHES INTER-INSTITUTIONAL  
COMMISSION TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

REF: GUATEMALA 528

¶1. (U) Summary: An inter-institutional commission to combat trafficking in persons and related crimes was established by Executive Order on July 12. Under an initial mandate of two years, the commission will serve as an inter-institutional body for consultation, development, and consensus on initiatives to combat trafficking in persons (TIP) to further meet Guatemala's international obligations. End summary.

¶2. (U) On July 2, President Berger signed Executive Order 246-2007, effective July 12, establishing the Inter-Institutional Commission to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Related Crimes. With an initial mandate of two years, the Commission will be tasked with recommending to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to the President measures to implement national and international legal instruments on TIP, and to provide prompt and comprehensive attention to trafficking victims. It will also implement the National Plan of Strategic Action, develop with the appropriate Ministry GOG policy to combat TIP and to protect trafficking victims, and raise public awareness of the issue.

¶3. (U) Guatemala ratified the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (September 2003), and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons (April 2004), which obligates signatories to adopt the necessary measures to prevent and combat trafficking in persons and to protect trafficking victims. The new Commission will facilitate coordination and cooperation among various State entities, with the voluntary participation of civil society organizations and other public and private entities.

¶4. (U) The inter-institutional body will be comprised of one representative each from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Government, Education, Culture and Sports, and Public Health and Social Assistance, the Secretariat of Social Welfare, the Presidential Secretariat of Social Communication, the Presidential Secretariat of Planning and Programming, and the Presidential Human Rights Commission.

¶5. (U) Comment: This timely Executive Order will not only enhance Guatemala's anti-TIP efforts but will also help ensure that the work of the informal inter-institutional working group, which was established in 2005 under the leadership of the Foreign Ministry, will continue with official status at the national level when a new administration takes office in January 2008.

